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PENNSYLVANIA READIES TO SEND OUT \$62 MILLION FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS



By Anthony Hennen, The Center Square

As Pennsylvania officials discuss an electric vehicle fee to replace the gas tax, federal funds are available to build out the EV charging infrastructure in the commonwealth.

PennDOT's first round of funding opened on March 27 and closes May 5 for EV stations across Pennsylvania. The money will flow through the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure grant program, with \$25 million available for fiscal year 2022 and \$37 million for fiscal year 2023.

In total, Pennsylvania will receive almost \$172 million over five years from the federal government.

"We've aligned our NEVI grant program to Federal Highway Administration's final rulemaking to ensure the best possible strategy and success for Pennsylvania," Acting PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll said. "Our grant program will enhance Pennsylvania's electric vehicle charging infrastructure while supporting local communities."

The money, PennDOT expects, will be awarded to local government agencies, non-profits, and businesses for the build-out.

"Funds for the PA NEVI grant program are to be awarded on a competitive basis to plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain EV Station Infrastructure sites across Pennsylvania," the release noted.

Federal guidelines require the money to prioritize the creation of an alternative fuel corridor first, which will serve as a viable route for EVs to use. Federal guidelines require a station every 50 miles, and then other routes can be built out.

The expansion comes as Pennsylvania officials grapple with how to fund roads and bridges with the rise of electric vehicles. The commonwealth relies on a gas tax to fund that maintenance and is considering some form of mileage fee or an annual payment from the roughly 67,000 EVs registered in Pennsylvania.

Anthony Hennen is a reporter for The Center Square. Previously, he worked for Philadelphia Weekly and the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal. He is managing editor of Expatalachians, a journalism project focused on the Appalachian region.